1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

797 apologized. In 1944, when the priest, annoyed by the sound of the gambling drum, angrily shouted across the river, a number of people kept their children home from school for a few days.

A Protestant missionary formerly visited this area annually, so that many Kaska have at some time attended Church of England rites. Some Indians were first baptized by Protestants and later by Catholics. The attitude of Dorothy Flower indicates what would probably happen if rivalry between the Protestant and Catholic churches ever developed in the Kaska area. She said: "I go to any church, English or Catholic. I go to make the priest feel happy."

As a liaison between the mission and the people, there is a church chief, an office originally set up by Father Allard, the first missionary in the Kaska area. The functions of this official consist principally of informing the people of rites and devotions. "He tell us to go to church. He just stand up outside. Let anybody go in. Then he come behind."—The position is at present held by an extremely shy and retiring widower, who many years ago was elected by a show of hands. Only one youth, Richard Day, regularly assists the priests in celebrating Mass. He seldom alludes to this role and receives no social prestige from his status.

REACTION TO NATURE

82 During the many years that the Kaska have occupied their subarctic forest environment, observation and speculation have enabled them to accumulate a considerable body of knowledge concerning natural phenomena. Many of their beliefs, being used to guide hunting and trapping, have been thoroughly verified by pragmatic testing. By permitting individuals to make an efficient adaptation in the climatic, floral, and faunal environments, such empirical knowledge can be considered as having offered the society a measure of control over nature. Other ideas about the environment are primarily descriptive; for example, relating types of weather with certain winds, recognizing varieties of snow, identifying trees with types of soil, and classifying the temperatures of riparian waters with their sources.

821 *Meteorological beliefs.* Generally the Indian is less concerned with predicting weather from day to day than he is in long range forecasting based on experience. Thus it is pointed out that September always brings a long rainy period, snow will fall heavily around the middle of October, the end of November is often marked by a spell of mild weather, and intense cold can be expected shortly before Christmas. These predictions are often fulfilled within reasonable margins of error. In short range prediction of weather, the condition of the sky at sunset and sunrise is the principal indication of trends. Thus black clouds in the north at sunset promise warmer weather; as Old Man expressed it: "Warm weather, that's his pillow. He lay down there." A red northern evening sky also signifies a warm day. A crimson eastern horizon in the evening indicates a cold night, while a similar sky at dawn points to warmer weather. In winter, when open stretches of rapid water are closely heard toward evening, cold weather may be expected.

Certain winds are recognized as more portending types of weather. These winds are not identified with the cardinal points, although observation has fixed the quarter from which they blow. Upper Liard Indians speak of a cold wind coming from the east or southeast;

1: Honigmann E-5 (1963-1965) 1969 ND12 Nelson ND12

a bitter cold wind, termed "passenger snowmen," blowing from the north-northwest, and the warm Chinook originating in the west.

A number of predictive beliefs are associated with snow. On the Upper Liard, when snow comes from downriver (south-southeast) it will generally continue for several days, coming from upriver (north-northwest), a snow flurry will soon stop. Commenting on the inconsistent flurries of snow in late October, Old Man described snow as "just the same like water. Bench go for a while; then nobody." In winter such reassurances warning welcome heavier snow to follow. "Injun say it 'means for very heavy one coming.'" Several varieties of snow are recognized, including the wet snow associated with the beginning or end of winter, the dry powdery snow of midwinter, and the crusted snow of early spring. To protect cut boards from freezing into snow snow when stored on the ground, they are always laid across poles or on a thin layer of spruce brush. Other adaptations to climate have been discussed in connection with clothing, shelter, and travel.

No particular beliefs about the rainbow or coronas lunulae were adduced. Sparrows are apparently not recognized, although the longer and shorter days of the year are perceived as by March, when the weather turns warmer, small children are often frightened by the last strong shot rushes from river ice and then get relieved back on the frozen surface as darkness. No unusual significance is attached to this phenomenon, which receives no supernatural explanation. Fog in winter is sometimes interpreted as an indication that a thaw has commenced.

Attitudes toward types of weather are consistent among the Kaska population. People do not like hot weather or persistent rain. On the contrary, women, with its crisp cold, is looked forward to, but it is thought that cold weather requires a period of adjustment. People explained that they often felt the cold intensely in October, although by November and December they no longer minded it. Rain or snow are regarded as unsuitable conditions for traveling and, unless the matter is urgent or the journey already underway, people will not until the weather has cleared. In summer after a rain there is a tendency to wait before starting a trip until the brush has dried. Changing weather, alternating between warm and cold, is thought to make a person weak. "November cold," Old Man said, "does you feel strong."

Ethnozoology. A sample of animal knowledge was obtained principally from one informant, Nicks, who worked to divide the species according to whether they had been created by God or the devil. Most animals are good, that is, they were created by God. The devil, however, made the frog, mink, otter, wolverine, coyote, and grizzly bear. These animals are generally regarded as hostile or dangerous to man. According to Old Man: "All kinds of game smart." It will be seen, however, that although intelligence is an attribute of all animals, the distribution of this trait is differently apportioned among the various creatures.

The rabbit and beaver are two examples of "smart" animals. The rabbit (*Lepus* sp.) is intelligent because he is hard to capture, running even from the faint sound of snowshoes. Nicks thought that rabbits became somewhat less canny in late winter, when they are easy to snare. Peter Tom said this very cold weather and snow made these animals less intelligent and easier to trap. Throughout the year rabbits inhabit brushy places, sleeping

to hamess even when green. Rubber is found in high mountains on rocky soil. The wood is good for fuel when dry and is easy to chop. The bruk is particularly comfortable, its saliva now being compared to silk. People also regard the odor of bukam bruk as highly pleasant.

Miscellaneous. Cosmic phenomena have stimulated relatively little speculative development among the Kaska. There is, for example, no clear idea if the moon and sun are male or female. With had even reports heard that to bilay the moon is a woman. This may be a reflection of the Catholic belief regarding Mary as the month dedicated the Virgin Mary. There are no clear of the moon affecting human behavior. The big Augustflower is a sign that gone is far but the planet itself does not influence the growth of galax. Eclipses are noted with wonder but no interpretation of their cause or function could be obtained.[1]

Some men, notably Old Man and River Jim, possess a good knowledge of hydrographic phenomena, like the ability to "read water," which has been derived from long experience working on traders' river boats. It is widely recognized that rivers like the Liard, which run in mountains, freeze quickly. On the other hand, rivers like the Frances and Dease, which have their sources in large lakes, take longer to ice over. People claim ice on a lake freezes quickly as the moment a smooth surface that is ideal for toboggan travel. In hunting wood ox sloughs and toboggans, the velocities are often run on the smooth down ice of rivers.

Directions are not related to the cardinal points and few Indians could indicate north or south. References to direction are generally by the courses of rivers or by known landmarks identified with place names.

Human Characteristics

In this section are reported knowledge and attitudes concerning the structure and functioning of the human body as well as information, based on reports, observation, and clinical testing, regarding socially patterned psychological processes. It is obvious that some of the data considered of popular, scarcely formulated beliefs, which may vary considerably between different individuals, especially between members of different tribal districts. Some of the ideas may be survivals of aboriginal conceptions. These, however, as contemporary Kaska thought are associated with attitudes which have undoubtedly been acquired from missionaries and other white men. As in the case of religion, no attempt has been made to classify aboriginal conceptions apart from introduced ideas, our purpose being to describe the content of knowledge regardless of its sources.

Human Structure and Processes

The pattern of human growth is compared to the development of other aspects of nature. "Anything in the ground he grow. Some big grow, no more to grow. Some just the same." Growth of the body is a function of bone development. Girls mature more rapidly than boys.

Weather, food, and heredity are the principal factors determining the growth process. Summer is a more favorable period for human development than winter, as again it would seem as though the organism is viewed as developing in harmony with the rest of the

[1] With exposure to a phase of the moon which is not observed can expect pneumonia. He will handle the [illegible] with trouble. But the anthropologist found nothing to [illegible]

2: Text E-S (1912-1915) 1917
MD12 Nelson MD12

see a big lake with what looks like an island in the middle." Big-Man was fond of the lad, and always called him "Grandson." The lad went up on the top of a high hill and looked around. He saw what looked like an island in the middle of a lake, and returned to tell Big-Man. The latter said, "That is the giant fishing." 539

Now they prepared to fight the giant. Big-Man made bow and arrows and spears, and the boy made a beaver-tooth axe. He intended to take a large beaver-tooth for the axe, but found he could not lift it, so he took a young beaver's tooth. Big-Man told the boy to go near the lake and to bark like a dog. He said, "The giant will become frightened and run home. You follow him up, barking, and I will lay in wait for him on the trail between the lake and his house." The fish the giant was catching in the lake were all covered with hair. When he heard what he thought was a dog barking, he put his pack of fish on his back and ran for home. When he came close enough, Big-Man fired an arrow at him; but the giant jumped aside, and the arrow missed him. Then Big-Man attacked him with the spear, but the giant evaded the thrusts. Now they seized each other and wrestled. After a long time Big-Man became weak, and called on the boy for help. The latter ran up, and, striking the giant with his beaver-tooth club, overstrung him, and he fell down. They then killed him.

Now they went to the giant's house. When the giantess saw them, she called out, "Why did you kill my husband?" She threw huge rocks at Big-Man, but the latter jumped aside and avoided them. The giantess stood up and put her breasts on Big-Man's shoulders. They were so heavy, he nearly fell down. They wrestled, and the boy cut the sinews of her legs as he had her husband's, and she fell down. They killed her and her babies and all her children. The babies were of the size of tall men. Big-Man took back his wife, and thanked the boy for his help.

The boy wanted to return to his own country and see his parents. He had been away a long time. He knew his country was far off, and he did not know which it was nor how to reach it. Big-Man knew his daughter. He said, "I will give you one of my dogs to ride. When you get out of food, kill him and eat him; but be sure to preserve one sinew-bone, and keep it close to your head when you sleep. It will be bare when you fall asleep; but when you awaken, it will be clothed with meat. Then you will always have food to eat. I shall also give you a walking-stick. When you swim, always stick it up over the head of your bed. In the morning you will find the stick pointing a certain way, which will be the direction you must follow for that day. Then you will know your road. Some morning when you find that the stick has fallen down and is lying flat, and your bone is devoid of meat, you 539 521 525

[1] Sinew-bone (Sen. Shuk) or ash. Means (food-ash) bone, sinew-bone, talk-ing. 11[3]

2: Teit E-5 (1912-1915) 1917
MD12 Nahane MD12

537 will know you are near your destination, and will reach home that day."
• 821 Big-Man also told him that he would not see him again, but that he
825 would know by signs when he died. He said, "While I die or am killed, you will see the sky all red; that is my blood. You will also see rain fall: that is my tears." Big-Man gave him his grizzly-bear dog to ride. The lad had only gone a little way when the bear began to growl and wanted to fight him. He called back to Big-Man, who changed the dogs, and gave him the black bear to ride.

He went on until he came to a country where there was no game, and became hungry. Then he killed the bear and ate it, but kept the bones, as advised. One morning when he awoke, he saw that the stick had fallen down and that there was an insect on the bone. He was glad, and he reached his parents that day. That is why black bears are much better eating than grizzly bears, and also why grizzly bears are more ferocious and want to fight people. That is also probably why people say that bears were originally dogs.

Not long afterwards the lad saw the sky all red, and rain fell. He then knew that his friend Big-Man was dead. That is why people say now that a red sky is blood (or Big-Man's blood), and when rain falls, it is tears (Big-Man's tears)."

5. THE GIANTS AND THE BOYS.

539 Two boys were stolen by a giant, who gave them to his wife to fatten for him. He hunted bears all the time, and killed plenty; but he was very fond of human flesh, and preferred it. He always told his wife to cook something else for him, meaning the boys; but she always cooked bears-meat, as she liked to keep the boys to help her fetch water and do other things. At last she thought her husband would some time get angry if she did not take his suggestions; so one morning early, when her husband had gone hunting, she woke up one of the boys and told him to take the buckets and go for water. She warned him to be absent, so that he would not know that she had killed his brother.

As soon as he left, she pulled all his brother's people, and then killed him. The lad heard his brother's cries, and knew what had happened. He kicked the buckets to pieces, and then went back to the house, where he called, "Give me the scissors! I am a grouse on the water-end!" She gave him the scissors. He broke them to pieces, and then ran away. As he did not return, the giantess went to see what was keeping him so long. When she saw the buckets and scissors broken, she called to her husband, who came back and started with a spear in pursuit of the boy. The boy hid in a crevasse of a glacier, where he was piled up. The giant was too large to enter, and he could not

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* Same in (Ibid., 24th, 25th).

A. Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
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partner mentioned to fly, indicating that power for evil exceeded in strength power for good.[9] The following tale is about an upper Liard River shaman who was still alive in early post-contact times:

Squeaky Dick was an evil shaman. Once the people lined up in front of his camp to kill him. He knew this. They had a cosmic radar to shoot him. The gun couldn't fire; all the parts refused to work. The people then started to kill him with a knife. Dick threw himself down and disappeared—blanket and all. The people poked through the brush with a knife hoping to kill him. Later Squeaky Dick returned and boasted of his escape.[10]

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People considered a variety of omens. Crackling of the fire represented a communication from the dead and portended another death in a short time. Indians commonly threw a small offering of food into the flames when they heard this sound.[11] Smoke from campfires deliberately burning across a river instead of rising promised that there would soon be water. The following formula is still explanatory: "If you expect your partner back and he doesn't come, tie a knot in a moccasin lace and put it near the fire. It is [unique a little bit] to hurt quick." To learn if one would soon travel a person held the tendon-stiff wing of a spruce hen with tendons attached over heat. The tendons were then released. If the exposed tendon jerked, then one would soon travel in the direction indicated by the movement.[12] Belief in the revelatory power of dreams was common and a body of lore existed for interpreting common dreams. To dream of eating with a deceased person indicated that the dreamer would die the next autumn. A dream of talking about or with a deceased acquaintance showed that a hunt undertaken on the following morning would be successful. Erotic dreams portended the killing of female animals. To dream of moving swans meant snow; a flock of approaching ducks in a dream spelled rain within a few days. A sick person sometimes dreamed of the individual who had ascertained him.

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A few common weather omens follow:

Rainbow: The end of rain.
Dragon-fly seen: Rain or snow in two days time.
Dragon-fly when seen: North wind soon with snow.
Dragon-fly in house seen: Rain in two days.
Owl cries: Rain at night.
Owl cries: Bad weather in about three days.
Owl cries in sky at sunset: Warm wind and mild weather.
Owl cries in sky at sunset: North wind coming.

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9 One informant asserted feeling that Thagit (?) ancestors of the Tsetsaut and Nisutlin clowns took an animal shadow, lifted it with a whistle, and then sacrificed it with the image of a man. By piercing this image with pins "all over" the victim could be brought to illness and death (D).

10 For the identification and interpretation of a witch-fear epidemic that gripped the post-contact Kaska, see Honigmann, *Culture Patterns and Processes of the Yukon Valley* (1949).

11 "When the fire crackles, spits out hungry and calling for food. Then food must be put into the fire." (Jenness, *Indians of the Canadian Arctic* [1954], 233. See also Swanton, *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationships of the Tlingit Indians* [1908], 466.) Kaska Indians vouched for similar beliefs among the Tahltan.

12 The use exactly equivalent with pieces of fine soft wildwood in contemporary Kaska society see Honigmann, *Kaska Indian Dreams* (1947).